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## **DEFENDANT NATE GRAY SENTENCED TO 15 YEARS IN JAIL IN BROAD NATIONAL PUBLIC CORRUPTION, FRAUD SCHEME**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – A Cleveland businessman convicted as part of a wide-ranging national public corruption scheme involving bribery and fraud has been sentenced to 15 years in prison, Assistant Attorney General Alice S. Fisher of the Criminal Division and U.S. Attorney Gregory A. White of the Northern District of Ohio announced today.

In addition to the 15-year prison term, Nate Gray, 47, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge James S. Gwin of the Northern District of Ohio to three years of supervised release and ordered to pay \$1.5 million in restitution to the Internal Revenue Service. Gray, convicted in August 2005 following a corruption conspiracy trial, had also pleaded guilty to evading payment of previously assessed income taxes. The sentence imposed by the court today includes both the corruption and the tax charges, and Gray was immediately remanded into custody.

The sentencing for one of Gray's co-defendants, New Orleans businessman Gilbert Jackson, 51, was continued to a later date. Jackson was also remanded into custody, and still faces trial the Eastern District of Louisiana in January 2006 on a multi-count indictment for tax evasion.

The sentence imposed today was the result of a multi-district probe of public corruption offenses in Cleveland, East Cleveland, Ohio, Houston and New Orleans. In all, eight defendants have been convicted and sentenced in the case, in which Department of Justice prosecutors were assisted by agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Internal Revenue Service's Criminal Investigation Division. The investigation revealed a wide range of public corruption, including the providing of money and luxury items to public officials in exchange for official acts such as the awarding of municipal contracts.

"As the lengthy sentence imposed today proves, there is a price to pay for public corruption," said Assistant Attorney General Fisher. "The bribes paid by Nate Gray and others for these substantial contracts represent a hidden, illegal tax on the citizens of these cities. The Department of Justice will continue to work diligently to prosecute those who pay bribes and those state and local officials who sell their public offices."

U.S. Attorney White said, "We are pleased with the sentences obtained in this case. Our efforts, however, do not end here. The U.S. Attorney's Office, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Internal Revenue Service remain committed to uncovering and prosecuting public officials and employees and private citizens who engage in public corruption offenses in the Northern District of Ohio. We will continue to follow investigative leads wherever they go and take appropriate prosecutive action."

“Public corruption impedes the smooth operation of government, whether it is state, federal or local,” stated Nancy Jardini, IRS Chief, Criminal Investigation. “Mr. Gray’s sentencing demonstrates what can happen when an individual corruptly interferes with the operation of government and evades their taxes.”

Emmanuel Onunwor, 47, the former mayor of East Cleveland, was previously sentenced to 108 months in prison and three years of supervised release. Onunwor was also ordered to pay restitution of more than \$5.1 million to the city of East Cleveland. He had been convicted at trial on 22 counts, including RICO conspiracy, extortion under color of official right (Hobbs Act), mail fraud, bankruptcy fraud and filing false tax returns.

Monique McGilbra, 41, the former city of Houston Director of Building Services, was sentenced to 36 months in prison, a \$5,000 fine and two years of supervised release. McGilbra had pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit mail and wire fraud. She was also sentenced in the Southern District of Texas to a concurrent term of 30 months in prison for participating in an honest services fraud scheme, and began serving her sentence on Sept. 6, 2005.

Oliver Spellman, 51, the former chief of staff to the mayor of Houston, was sentenced to two years probation and a \$10,000 fine following his guilty pleas on a charge of conspiracy to commit extortion under color of official right (Hobbs Act).

Brent Jividen, 43, a former employee of Honeywell Corporation and an associate of Nate Gray, was sentenced to 30 months in jail and two years of supervised release following his guilty plea to a RICO conspiracy involving predicate acts of conspiring to commit extortion under color of official right (Hobbs Act) and of mail and wire fraud. Jividen began serving his sentence on Oct. 31, 2005.

Ricardo Teamor, 59, a former attorney and associate of Nate Gray, was sentenced to four months in prison, four months of home detention, two years of supervised release and a \$15,000 fine. Teamor had previously pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit extortion under color of official right (Hobbs Act) as well as a substantive Hobbs Act count, and began serving his sentence on Oct. 31, 2005.

Former Cleveland City Councilman Joseph T. Jones, 37, was sentenced to two years of probation, including six months in home confinement. Jones tendered his resignation immediately following his guilty plea.

These cases were prosecuted Assistant U.S. Attorneys Steven M. Dettlebach and Benita Y. Pearson and by Trial Attorney Mary K. Butler of the Public Integrity of the Criminal Division at the U.S. Department of Justice, which is headed by Section Chief Noel L. Hillman.

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